



# BUSINESS PROTOCOL



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:

12S3-T6C9-F5I9

1

## Warm-up

Do you work with people from other cultures?

2

## Key words

Complete the definitions below.

counterpart   custom   diverse   flatter   itinerary   protocol   reserved   straightforward

1. \_\_\_\_\_ (*adjective*): not showing your feelings or thoughts
2. \_\_\_\_\_ (*verb*): to praise (someone) in order to make them feel attractive or important
3. \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*) a way of behaving
4. \_\_\_\_\_ (*adjective*): honest and direct
5. \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*): a person in the same position in another company or organization
6. \_\_\_\_\_ (*uncountable noun*): the system of rules and acceptable behavior
7. \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*): a detailed plan or route of a journey
8. \_\_\_\_\_ (*adjective*): including many different types of people

3

## Reading

Read the article on the next page and put the headings above the correct paragraphs.

the United States

the United Kingdom

Malaysia

India

Turkey

France



## Doing business around the world

1. \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup>

Business dealings tend to be quite formal and business people are usually reserved on first meeting. Make sure you are punctual for meetings as it is considered rude to keep people waiting. A firm handshake when greeting someone is customary, unlike the continental style of kissing on both cheeks. Men and women tend to dress conservatively in business suits, and they often exchange business cards at the beginning or end of a meeting.

2. During negotiations, avoid speaking too directly and do not flatter your counterparts, as it will make them uncomfortable. The people have a fairly sarcastic sense of humor, but they don't mean to be offensive.

3. \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>

When you meet your business contacts for the first time, a firm handshake, a friendly smile and good eye contact will make a good first impression. The culture can be quite relaxed. Here, people often call each other by their first names, even their bosses. It's wise to make polite, friendly small talk at the beginning of the meeting. Good small talk topics include hobbies and leisure, tips concerning local arts and entertainment, restaurants, nightlife, and popular sports teams. People here are quite direct in the way they communicate, so feel free to express yourself in a straightforward manner. But avoid being too negative or critical. This will look unprofessional.

4. \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>

During meetings and negotiations, it's important to establish the ethnic identity of your counterparts. This is a diverse country with three main ethnic groups and more than 50 smaller groups. Therefore, be careful to respect the customs of each ethnic group. When speaking to a native person, for example, use "Encik" (Mr) before a man's first name, and "Puan" (Mrs) or "Cik" (Miss) before a woman's. This protocol does not apply to business people of Chinese and Indian descent, who may be called "Mr", "Mrs", or "Miss".

5. \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup>

The traditional greeting is to hold your hands together at chest level and bend your head towards your fingertips, but Westerners are more likely to be greeted with a handshake. However, if you are a woman, you shouldn't initiate a handshake with a man.

6. Meetings usually start with tea and small talk, as building personal relationships is an important part of doing business here. Bring plenty of business cards and be flexible about timing - itineraries often change at the last minute.

7. Most business meals are lunches, although you may be invited to an associate's home for dinner. The locals enjoy entertaining and many of them believe that "serving a guest is like serving God". Leave a little food on your plate to avoid offending your host as an empty plate may suggest you are still hungry.

8. \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup>

The business culture here is very formal. You should wear quality business clothes and always address those you meet for the first time using Monsieur or Madame. When introducing yourself, use both your first and last name, and greet your associates with a light handshake.

9. During negotiations, people consider it rude to mention money at the start of a meeting so leave this until you are near the end. Expect people to interrupt you a lot - this is a sign that the other side is interested in what you are saying.

10. \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup>

People's body language may be confusing for some foreigners. For example, locals usually indicate "no" by raising their eyebrows, while making the sound "tsk". Equally, if a business associate moves his head from side to side, it does not mean "no", but "I don't understand". Use the phone, not email, to follow up meetings, as people here prefer to communicate directly.



### 4 Find the words

Find a word or phrase in the article that means ...

1. on time (adjective, P.1) \_\_\_\_\_
2. using words that mean the opposite of what you say, in order to hurt someone's feelings or to make a joke (adjective, P.2) \_\_\_\_\_
3. not soft but not completely hard (adjective, P.3) \_\_\_\_\_
4. where somebody comes from (phrase, P.4) \_\_\_\_\_
5. cause something to begin (verb, P.5) \_\_\_\_\_
6. the time when something happens (noun, P.6) \_\_\_\_\_
7. stop you from speaking for a short period (verb, P.9) \_\_\_\_\_
8. people who live in the area you are talking about (plural noun, P.10) \_\_\_\_\_

### 5 Phrases from the text

Match the words to make phrases from the text.

- |                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. keep somebody  | a. a good first impression |
| 2. dress          | b. by their first name     |
| 3. make           | c. conservatively          |
| 4. greet somebody | d. personal relationships  |
| 5. call somebody  | e. waiting                 |
| 6. build          | f. with a handshake        |
| 7. raise          | g. your eyebrows           |

Now make your own sentence with each phrase.

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....



## 6 Expressions for giving advice

Look at the underlined structures below and put them into the correct categories.

- a. If you are a woman, you shouldn't initiate a handshake with a man.
- b. Be careful to respect the customs of each ethnic group.
- c. Feel free to express yourself in a straightforward manner.
- d. Avoid being too negative or critical.
- e. It's wise to make polite, friendly small talk at the beginning of the meeting.
- f. You should wear quality business clothes.

1. Advising someone to do something:

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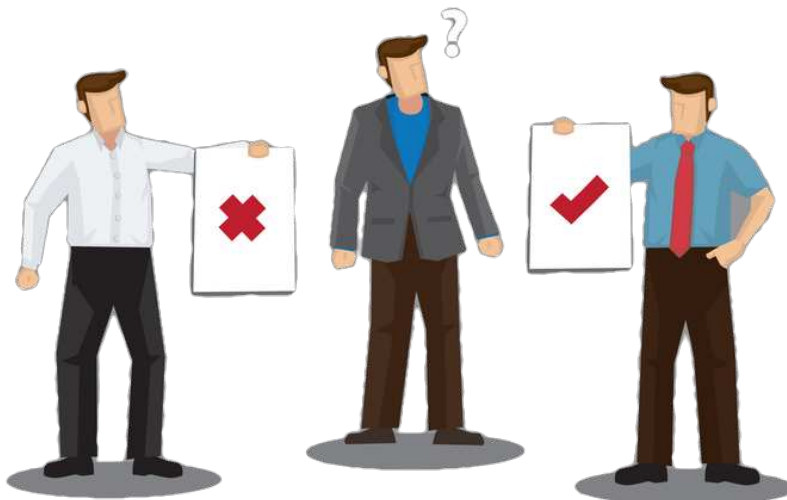
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2. Advising someone not to do something:

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Now complete the sentences below using an appropriate structure like in the example.

1. In Germany, you shouldn't make jokes/avoid making jokes (make jokes).  
People prefer serious communication.
2. In Finland ..... (accept an invitation to the sauna). It's considered a sign of hospitality.
3. In the United Arab Emirates, ..... (shake hands with your left hand) as it is considered unclean.
4. If you don't speak French in France, that's OK, but ..... (apologize for your lack of fluency) before continuing the conversation.
5. In Italy ..... (focus on business) at the beginning of the meeting. The business culture is more relaxed and relationship building is important.
6. .... (set your alarm early) when doing business in Australia. Punctuality is very important.
7. When receiving a business card in Japan, ..... (accept it with both hands). The business card is treated with a lot of respect.
8. In South Korea ..... (refuse an invitation) to karaoke. Karaoke is a very popular and acceptable part of doing business.

**7****Talking point**

How would you describe the business culture in your country?



# Key

## 1. Warm-up

Time: 2-4 mins

Ask general questions to get your students to relax, for example: How do you feel today? How was your weekend? Write on the whiteboard "Business protocol" and ask the following question: Do you work with people from other cultures and how do you enjoy it? Encourage a short class discussion.

## 2. Key words

Time: 4-5 mins

Firstly, elicit examples of adjectives, verbs, nouns. Introduce the task. Then ask one student to read out all the words. Instruct the class to work individually and to complete the exercise. Provide sufficient time. Nominate some students to read their sentences aloud. Correct pronunciation on the spot.

- |                |             |              |                    |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. reserved    | 2. flatter  | 3. custom    | 4. straightforward |
| 5. counterpart | 6. protocol | 7. itinerary | 8. diverse         |

## 3. Reading

Time: 3-5 mins

Before the task give a hint: You will read about what is regarded as acceptable and not acceptable for certain cultures. Then ask students to match the headings to the text

Elicit answers by nominating several students. Optionally, you can encourage a short discussion about text findings and students' personal experience. Ask: Was there anything shocking? Do you agree with everything that you have read?

1. UNITED KINGDOM
2. UNITED STATES
3. MALAYSIA
4. INDIA
5. FRANCE
6. TURKEY

## 4. Find the words

Time: 3-5 mins

Ask students to find the words in the text. They should compare their answers with other students (allow the use of English-English dictionaries if necessary). Elicit answers.

Even if you notice pronunciation issues, remember not to point to any specific student. At the end of the task model correct pronunciation and ask everyone to repeat after you. Make this an open class positive practice.

Praise your students for doing a good job and encourage them to relax for the next task.

- |             |              |              |                    |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. punctual | 2. sarcastic | 3. firm      | 4. ethnic identity |
| 5. initiate | 6. timing    | 7. interrupt | 8. locals          |



## 5. Phrases from the text

Time: 4-5 mins

Ask your students to read the words from both columns. They should try to match the words to form possible collocations. Monitor the task and when completed, instruct your students to check their choices in pairs. Quickly elicit correct answers.

Encourage your students to work in pairs to create sentences. In 1:1 lessons, ask your student to read his/her sentences to you. Correct grammar and lexis if necessary.

1. e            2. c            3. a            4. f            5. b            6. d            7. g

## 6. Expressions for giving advice

Time: 6 mins

Introduce the task. Then, instruct the class to work in pairs and to complete the exercise. Monitor the task but do not interfere. Elicit correct answers and go to the next part of the exercise. Provide sufficient time. Then nominate two students to read their answers aloud. At this point do not focus on pronunciation. Optionally: Ask students to agree/disagree with a-f statements and to give their reasoning based on own experience.

Ask students to complete the second part of the exercise and to compare their options in pairs. Elicit answers and encourage a short discussion.

1. Advising someone to do something: Be careful to ...; Feel free to ...; It's wise to ...; should
2. Advising someone not to do something: You shouldn't; Avoid + -ing

Possible answers:

2. it's wise to accept an invitation to the sauna/you should accept an invitation to the sauna
3. you shouldn't shake hands with your left hand/avoid shaking hands with your left hand
4. you should apologize for your lack of fluency/it's wise to apologize for your lack of fluency
5. you shouldn't focus on business/avoid focusing on business
6. Feel free to set your alarm early/You should set your alarm early/ It's wise to set your alarm early
7. you should accept it with both hands/be careful to accept it with both hands
8. you shouldn't refuse an invitation

## 7. Talking point

Time: 3 mins

Try changing the seating positions of your students e.g. by asking them to move two seats to their right/left. Then ask them to start a discussion. Encourage speaking in pairs or small groups

Optional task for homework: Ask the students to write an essay answer for the next lesson (180-220 words).